

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently amended): A method for establishing a mutant of *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain having tolerance to an antibiotic drug, wherein the tolerance is at least 1,000 times higher than that of wild type *Escherichia coli*, which comprises:

- (a) introducing a mutation into the genomic DNA of *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain by culturing it under a certain temperature;
- (b) selecting a mutant *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain tolerant to said drug; and
- (c) repeating said step (a) and said step (b) to develop increased tolerance of said mutant *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain to said drug until the tolerance is at least 1,000 times higher than that of wild type *Escherichia coli*, wherein the repeating of said step (b) a second time and thereafter ~~are~~ is carried out under a higher concentration of said drug than used in said step (b) therebefore, and wherein the repeating of said step (a) a second time and thereafter ~~are~~ is carried out under the same concentration of said drug as used in said step (b) immediately therebefore.

24. (Previously presented): A mutant of *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 23, which grows in the presence of 6,000 µg/ml of ampicillin.

25. (Previously presented): A mutant of *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 23, which grows in the presence of 500 µg/ml of ofloxacin.

26. (Previously presented): A mutant of *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 23, which grows in the presence of 7,000 µg/ml of nalidixic acid.

~~29.~~ 27. (Currently amended): A mutant of *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 23, which grows in the presence of 26,000 µg/ml of streptomycin.